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Wednesday, 30 September 2009, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Ms. Clinton	(United States of America)
Members:	Austria	Mr. Mayr-Harting
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Yoda
	China	Mr. Zhang Yesui
	Costa Rica	Mr. Urbina
	Croatia	Mr. Vilović
	France	Mr. Joyandet
	Japan	Mr. Takasu
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Shalgham
	Mexico	Mr. Heller
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Turkey	Mr. Apakan
	Uganda	Mr. Rugunda
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Sawers
	Viet Nam	Mr. Le Luong Minh

Agenda

Women and peace and security

Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to Security Council resolution 1820 (2008) (S/2009/362)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Women and peace and security

Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to Security Council resolution 1820 (2008) (S/2009/362)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Albania, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Belgium, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Côte d'Ivoire, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Panama, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Romania, Rwanda, Senegal, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the United Republic of Tanzania, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, the representatives of the aforementioned countries took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: On behalf of the Council, I wish to acknowledge the presence in the Chamber of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Regional Cooperation of Burkina Faso, His Excellency Mr. Bedouma Alain Yoda, and the Minister of State for Cooperation and Francophonie of France, His Excellency Mr. Alain Joyandet.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2009/489, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Albania, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Panama, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Romania, Rwanda, Senegal, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United Republic of Tanzania and the United States of America.

I wish to draw the attention of members to document S/2009/362, containing the report of the Secretary-General pursuant to Security Council resolution 1820 (2008).

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Austria, Burkina Faso, China, Costa Rica, Croatia, France, Japan, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mexico, Russian Federation, Turkey, Uganda, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Viet Nam

The President: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1888 (2009).

I now have the privilege of making a statement in my capacity as Secretary of State of the United States of America.

I am very grateful to speak before the Security Council on this important issue. I want to thank everyone who has worked very hard to reach this point

on this resolution and, of course, to have it adopted unanimously. We are here to address an issue that has received too little attention, not only in this Chamber over the past six decades, but also, I would suggest, in all of our halls of Government across the world. It is an important issue that goes to the core of our commitment to ensure the safety of the United Nations Member States and their citizens.

Under the United Nations Charter, the 15 members of this Council bear primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. Satisfying that responsibility includes our protecting the lives and physical security of all people, including the women who comprise half the planet's population. This responsibility is particularly acute in circumstances where peace and stability are challenged.

Even though women and children are rarely responsible for initiating armed conflict, they are often war's most vulnerable and violated victims. The resolution we have adopted today represents a step forward in our global efforts to end violence perpetrated against women and children in conflict zones, and it builds on two prior Security Council resolutions — resolution 1325 (2000), which calls on all parties in conflicts to respect women's rights and increase their participation in peace negotiations and post-conflict reconstruction efforts; and resolution 1820 (2008), which affirms the ambitions set out in resolution 1325 (2000) and establishes a clear link between maintaining international peace and security and preventing and responding to sexual violence used as a tactic of war to target civilians. Yet, despite these actions by the Security Council, violence against women and girls in conflict-related situations has not diminished; in fact, in some cases it has escalated.

Reading the headlines, one might think that the use of rape as a tactic of war happens only occasionally or in a few places, such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo or the Sudan. That would be bad enough, but the reality is much worse. We have seen rape used as a tactic of war before in Bosnia, Burma, Sri Lanka and elsewhere. In too many countries and in too many cases, the perpetrators of this violence are not punished, and so this impunity encourages further attacks.

Last month, I travelled to Goma in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, where over 1,100 rapes are reported every month. I met with survivors of sexual violence, and the physical and emotional damage to individual women and their families from these attacks cannot be quantified, nor can the toll on their societies. The dehumanizing nature of sexual violence does not harm just a single individual, a single family or even a single village or a single group; it shreds the fabric that weaves us together as human beings. It endangers families and communities, erodes social and political stability, and undermines economic progress. We need to understand that it holds all of us back.

Also, our failure as an international body to respond concretely to this global problem erodes our collective effectiveness. So we must act now to end this crisis, not only to protect vulnerable people and promote human security, but also to uphold the legitimacy of this body.

The international community has made progress. Many peacekeeping mandates now include Security Council requests for strengthened measures to prevent and respond to sexual violence. In Chad and the Sudan, United Nations peacekeepers have clear instructions underscoring their responsibility to protect local populations against sexual and gender-based violence. I recently met with United Nations troops in Liberia, who provide an excellent example of the steps a United Nations mission can take, both through its own actions and in cooperation with the host Government, to prevent violence against women and girls. It is also very important that the United Nations Mission in Liberia includes an all-women police unit from India. That all-women police unit has helped to motivate more Liberian women to become police officers, and the Mission has launched a joint United Nations-Liberian campaign against rape.

These steps are essential but, alone, they are not sufficient. Resolution 1888 (2009) identifies specific steps that the United Nations and Member States can and should take to improve the Organization's response to sexual violence committed during situations of armed conflict. It calls on the Secretary-General to appoint a special representative to lead, coordinate and advocate efforts to end sexual violence. We expect that person to engage at high levels with civilian and military leaders to spearhead the United Nations activities on this front. It also calls on the Secretary-General to rapidly deploy a team of experts to work with Governments to strengthen the rule of law,

address impunity and enhance accountability, while drawing attention to the full range of legal venues that can be brought into play, including domestic, international and mixed courts that bring local and international judges and prosecutors together to strengthen local justice systems.

We must also recognize that ending conflicts outright is the most certain path to ending sexual violence in conflicts. So pursuing peace and successful post-conflict transitions should be our highest priority. In States where conflict is taking place and in those that are moving beyond it, local police must receive better training, the rule of law must be strengthened, and survivors must be ensured full access to justice and protection throughout the judicial process. We envision that the team of experts called for in the resolution will help us to strengthen initiatives like those.

Beyond the measures outlined in the resolution, the Security Council should take additional steps. Protecting women and children should be a critical priority for all troops who wear the blue helmet. To reflect this, new and renewed peacekeeping mandates should include language condemning sexual violence and giving further guidance to peacekeeping missions to work with local authorities to end it. We must seek to ensure that our respective military and police forces, especially those that will participate in peacekeeping missions, develop the expertise to prevent and respond to violence against women and children. This will be helped by increasing the number of women who serve in United Nations peacekeeping missions. When I visited the Mission in Goma, I was very impressed at how integrated it was in every way — staff from every country, every kind of person represented, and many women in the leadership as well as in the ranks.

Let us not forget that it is often women who lead the call for peace in communities shattered by violence. We have seen women in this role from Liberia, Rwanda and Northern Ireland to Guatemala. Even when they suffer terrible losses in conflicts they had no part in starting, women have the will to reach across divisions, find common ground and foster understanding. As they seek peace, so must we by making sure they are part of all efforts. So I urge United Nations Member States to make sure that their foreign assistance programmes include measures to prevent and respond to violence against women and children and to ensure that women are included in designing and implementing those programmes.

In his speech to the General Assembly last week, President Obama challenged nations of the world to assume responsibility for the challenges confronting us.

Certainly, the challenge of sexual violence in conflict cannot and should not be separated from the broader security issues confronting the Council. It is time for all of us to assume our responsibility to go beyond condemning this behaviour and take concrete steps to end it, to make it socially unacceptable, to recognize that it is not cultural; it is criminal. And the more we say that, over and over and over again, the more we will change attitudes and create peer pressure and the conditions for the elimination of this violation.

When I was in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, I was told of an old proverb that says, "No matter how long the night, the day is sure to come". Well, I hope our work today, and every day going forward, will hasten the time when thousands of women around the world will be able to feel comfortable in walking the streets of their cities and villages freely again, to work outside their homes, collect firewood and water without fear, play with their children, spend time with their husbands and enjoy all the blessings of life in freedom, peace and security.

That is our dream for a better future for them and for us, and I thank this body for the strong commitment that this resolution represents.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council. I kind of like being a president, so this may go on a little longer than anticipated.

I now invite the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, to take the floor.

The Secretary-General: I am pleased to address the Security Council again on the subject of resolution 1820 (2008).

At the outset, Madam President, I would like to welcome you again to the United Nations. I would like also to commend your leadership and commitment on all the major goals and ideals of the United Nations, including this very important issue of women and peace and security.

Despite some progress in responding to sexual violence in armed conflicts, the deliberate targeting of civilians continues unabated, including on a widespread or systematic basis. Parties to armed

conflict continue to use sexual violence with efficient brutality. The perpetrators generally operate with impunity.

States and other parties to conflict must uphold their international legal obligations. The international community must do more to prevent violence, protect individuals, punish perpetrators and provide redress to victims.

With its resolution 1888 (2009) today, the Security Council is sending an unequivocal message — a call to action. It is an ambitious platform for intensifying this struggle. It builds on resolution 1820 (2008), which itself set a important precedent by recognizing the links between sexual violence and sustainable peace and security. I am fully committed to ensuring that the provisions of both resolutions are implemented, in partnership with all relevant stakeholders. I will continue to ensure effective follow-up by the United Nations system.

The Security Council's continued engagement will be crucial. My recent report to the Council (S/2009/362) offered a series of mutually reinforcing recommendations for action.

Sexual violence — in armed conflict or, indeed, at any time — should have no place and find no haven in the world. We must all do our part to fight and end discrimination against women and girls. The new gender entity recently agreed by the General Assembly should strengthen our work for women's empowerment; I have asked the Deputy Secretary-General to lead efforts to put that entity in place.

I will also continue to do everything in my power to advance gender equality among United Nations staff, including in my senior appointments.

Women's empowerment must be at the heart of our global work for peace and development.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for his statement and for his support.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Bedouma Alain Yoda, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Regional Cooperation of Burkina Faso.

Mr. Yoda (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): My delegation is grateful to the Security Council presidency for the convening of this important meeting of the Council, at which the Council adopted resolution 1888 (2009) to follow up the implementation of resolution 1820 (2008), on sexual violence in areas of armed conflict.

We greatly appreciate the presence among us of the Secretary-General and his participation in this important discussion, as well as the valuable and unequivocal message he has sent on this topic. The special attention that the Security Council has devoted to the fate of women and girls living in areas of armed conflict reflects the international community's awareness of the harmful consequences of sexual violence against women and girls in conflict areas.

The momentum generated by the adoption of resolution 1820 (2008) has sounded the alarm about this scourge against the dignity of women, which undermines their ability to contribute to the maintenance of peace and social stability. The situation is grave: especially in conflict areas in Africa, in particular the Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, acts of sexual violence against women and girls in areas of armed conflict are taking on a worrisome magnitude, which the international community can no longer tolerate.

Such acts of violence against women fuel hatred among the warring parties and prevent the full participation of women in the process of post-conflict reconstruction.

The resolution the Council has just adopted under your leadership, Madam President, will enable us to equip the international community and the protagonists in armed conflict to better understand the consequences of this human tragedy and to shoulder their responsibility to protect human rights during times of conflict.

Burkina Faso has always endorsed all initiatives aimed at ensuring respect for human dignity, in particular the dignity of women, and at establishing a peaceful society free of all serious violations of human rights. In accordance with the ideals of peace and freedom set out in the Charter of the United Nations, Burkina Faso unreservedly supports the content of the resolution we have just adopted and reaffirms its thanks to the delegation of the United States and other delegations for their effort to achieve a balanced consensus text which can contribute to eradicating sexual violence in armed conflict.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Alain Joyandet, Minister of State for Cooperation and Francophonie of France.

Mr. Joyandet (France) (*spoke in French*): I welcome the convening, on the initiative of the United States presidency of the Security Council, of this public debate on the issue of women and peace and security, focusing on the fight against sexual violence in armed conflict. The worldwide fight against this scourge is a priority.

Sadly, right now the topic is a timely one. During the events of 28 September in Conakry, Guinea, many people were killed and women were raped in the streets of the city. France would like to alert the Council to the tragic situation that is currently taking place in Conakry.

The worldwide fight against this scourge is a priority of France's foreign policy. We are delighted by the commitment of the United States on this issue, and I in this regard I hail the personal efforts of Hillary Clinton.

This new resolution marks a decisive step for the protection of women in armed conflict, nine years after the Council's adoption of the groundbreaking resolution 1325 (2000), and one year after the adoption of resolution 1820 (2008). It will strengthen the genuine implementation of those resolution thanks to its coherent set of provisions.

First of all, the appointment of a special representative of the Secretary-General to direct the fight against sexual violence in armed conflict is a major step forward, aiming to ensure the coherence of United Nations action with the support of United Nations Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict. We hope that this post will be created as soon as possible. We would like to see the appointment of a person with experience in the field and real knowledge of the issues of sexual violence. This person should also be in a position to be a voice for the voiceless — that is, the victims of these atrocities. We hope that the Secretary-General's report to identify possible improvements in the coherence of United Nations action, which will be put together over the next three months, will permit the new special representative to gain time when taking up the post.

Next, the creation of a team of experts charged with helping Governments in need will help bolster national authorities with high-level technical expertise available from within the United Nations or made available by nations that so desire.

Within the sphere of peacekeeping operations, newly inaugurated women's protection advisers, whose mandate will be to monitor and follow-up on situations, will complement the actions of gender counselors. France will take a particular interest in ensuring the implementation of this measure. It is also essential that sexual violence be subject to specific follow-up in the reports on peacekeeping operations and the in annual report of the Secretary-General, including information on parties to armed conflict who commit sexual violence in situations that are on the Council's agenda, so as to provide more data and information, which for the moment remains too fragmentary.

I hope to have convinced everyone of the coherence of the set of provisions the Council has established with this new resolution, which include: the special representative; the Secretary-General's report to be completed within three months, to strengthen the effectiveness of the United Nations; the team of experts to better prevent and deal with sexual violence in States where it is necessary; strengthening the contribution of peacekeeping operations through the creation of the post of women's protection counselors; and annual reports by the Secretary-General so that the Council has adequate information, which is an essential prerequisite for its actions.

Allow me to highlight now France's commitment to two complementary elements in this plan: the mechanism for the protection of children in armed conflict; and the need for the Council to decide to impose sanctions where necessary to combat impunity. First of all, we must make use of the possibilities offered by the Council's Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict. This Group makes it possible to consider problematic situations, to make recommendations and, in case of persistent non-compliance with its recommendations by belligerents, to consider adopting sanctions by the Council. This is a unique mechanism whose effectiveness on the ground is real.

I welcome the very significant institutional progress made by the adoption last month of resolution 1882 (2009), which, inter alia, expanded the monitoring and reporting mechanism of resolution 1612 (2005) to include sexual violence committed against children, independent of the question of whether or not child soldiers are present. While this mechanism applies to children, it can nevertheless make a useful contribution to combating sexual

violence against women. Just one figure allows us to grasp the relevance of such an approach: It is estimated that 60 per cent of the women raped in the Democratic Republic of the Congo are minors. In this respect, transparency, cooperation and coordination of efforts between the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and the new special representative of the Secretary-General on sexual violence and armed conflict will be essential.

We must also accept the idea that without genuine punishment there can be neither prevention nor deterrence. Here, France welcomes the work done by the sanctions committees. Pursuant to the commitment made in resolution 1820 (2008) the Council must systematically consider the possibility of including sexual violence as grounds for sanctions when creating or reviewing the mandates of these committees. When the grounds exist, it is up to the experts to cite them. With this in mind, last March, together with Belgium, the United Kingdom and the United States, we supported the inclusion by the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1533 (2004) concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo of four members of the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda on the list of persons subject to individual sanctions.

Finally, France is pleased that the fight against sexual violence was subject to particular attention during the Security Council's annual visit to Africa in May. At that time the Security Council successfully advocated with the authorities of the Democratic Republic of the Congo for the prosecution of five officers accused of sexual violence. The Council must remain mobilized on this issue.

In conclusion I would like to recall that it is our responsibility to develop programmes to assist victims, to offer them care and prospects for rehabilitation and to work to avoid their stigmatization. Meeting their needs means that they must be systematically consulted and involved in all phases of the programmes designed for them. Members may be assured that France fully associates itself with and will join in the implementation of specific projects to assist victims of rape and other sexual violence.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Mexico.

Mr. Heller (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for joining us at this important meeting of the Security Council. We would also like to welcome to the Council Chamber Mr. Bedouma Alain Yoda, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Burkina Faso, and Mr. Alain Joyandet, Minister of State for Cooperation and Francophonie of France.

I would like in particular to welcome you, Madam Secretary of State, and to acknowledge your personal commitment and leadership, which have created renewed impetus for the issue of the protection of women's rights and the prevention of all forms of violence against women. My delegation would also like to thank the delegation of the United States for leading negotiations on resolution 1888 (2009), which has just been adopted.

With the unanimous adoption of that resolution, the Security Council has reaffirmed its commitment to the protection of women in armed conflict. The significant number of delegations that joined in sponsoring this initiative shows that the international community is resolved to ensure that women and children no longer remain the principal victims of the armed conflicts which, deplorably, are occurring in many parts of the world.

Council members were able to see for ourselves the gravity of the acts of sexual violence against women and children in areas of armed conflict in the course of our visit to a number of African countries last May, in particular the Democratic Republic of the Congo. On that occasion we witnessed the consequences of these crimes for societies and their negative impact on efforts to find solutions to crisis situations and promote an effective process of national reconciliation. For that reason we wish to reiterate, as does resolution 1888 (2009), the primary obligation of all parties to an armed conflict to respect and to enforce at all times international humanitarian law, which grants special protection to women and children.

My delegation believes that the establishment of the post of Special Representative of the Secretary-General on sexual violence in situations of armed conflict will make it possible to improve the systematic and comprehensive attention that the United Nations pays in response to sexual violence in these situations.

This new mandate should work in a coordinated manner with other United Nations mechanisms and agencies in order to harness synergies and to prevent duplication. In particular, there is a broad relationship

between the objectives of resolution 1888 (2009) and resolution 1882 (2009), on children and armed conflict, which was adopted by the Security Council last August.

These common objectives must be duly explored with a view to providing comprehensive protection for all those who, due to their condition, suffer most from the consequences of armed conflict, that is, women and children. In the light of the aforementioned, we believe that the Security Council must also pay close attention to the ongoing negotiations on a composite gender entity within the framework of the General Assembly and decide to review the mandate of the Special Representative in a reasonable period of time and in the light of the results of the procedure outlined in General Assembly resolution 63/311.

While more can be done at the international level in order to prevent sexual violence in situations of armed conflict, the eradication of sexual violence will only be achieved if national capacities among those States that are addressing situations of conflict are improved with a view to bringing the perpetrators of such crimes to justice.

Therefore, one of the most relevant aspects of the resolution is the identification within the United Nations of a multidisciplinary team of experts who, when their assistance is required and with the consent of the State concerned, can be deployed to the field in order to work jointly with the Government and the United Nations system to undertake projects for technical cooperation to strengthen the rule of law, prevent impunity and address victims' needs.

It is clear that currently we have strong tools for preventing sexual violence in areas of conflict. The true challenge that we face is making full use of this array of instruments, if we truly wish to ensure that more women and children do not fall victim to the spiral of violence that is caused by armed conflict.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the United Kingdom.

Sir John Sawers (United Kingdom): I was struck by the words of the Foreign Minister of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the General Assembly last week. He said that acts of sexual violence committed against women and girls in the east of his country constituted the most shameful and serious crimes experienced by humanity in the twenty-first century. Those words were a powerful reminder of the challenge this Council faces as it takes forward work on the agenda set last year by resolution 1820 (2008).

Sexual violence is a crime for which individuals can — and must — be held responsible, however senior they are. Perpetrators of sexual violence know that one result of their crime is to destroy local communities and make lasting peace harder to achieve. That is often their intention, as continued conflict leaves the men of violence — and it is invariably men — in a position of dominance.

You saw that challenge first-hand during your visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Madam President. We are grateful for the strong leadership that you personally and that the United States has given on this agenda. The Secretary-General's presence here today signals his personal engagement. He has taken up the issue with passion, and I encourage him to persist.

And as Minister Joyandet reminded us, the Security Council mission to Africa in May made forceful representations to the Democratic Republic of the Congo leadership and we welcome the steps taken to bring to account officers of the Democratic Republic of the Congo armed forces who have been involved in sexual violence.

The United Kingdom welcomes the resolution we have unanimously adopted today. It further strengthens our collective commitment to end impunity for sexual violence. The resolution gives new coherence to United Nations efforts through the initiative, UN Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict. It provides new leadership to combat sexual violence, through the creation of a special representative of the Secretary-General. It creates new steps to name and shame parties to armed conflict that perpetrate sexual violence. It calls on the United Nations to boost its support of national efforts to strengthen the rule of law, by deploying teams of experts in situations where sexual violence is occurring with apparent impunity. And it improves the information flow to the Council on patterns of sexual violence to allow us to develop specific, actionable responses.

In combination, these measures give us new tools to act on sexual violence. We welcome and support them, alongside the General Assembly's recent decision to form a composite United Nations gender entity. The key now will be implementation.

The Council has come a long way since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) nine years ago. It has taken time, too much time, for the United Nations to address the issue of systematic sexual violence in conflict. I would like to pay tribute to the pioneering work of Dr. Denis Mukwege and his colleagues at the Panzi Hospital in Bukavu, and Dr. Jo Lusi and his colleagues at the HEAL Hospital in Goma, where the women and children who have been raped and brutally defiled are given treatment and care.

I also commend the work of the many people around the world who have campaigned to raise the issue of sexual violence onto the political agenda: Eve Ensler, Lisa Jackson and the non-governmental organization, Women for Women, led by Zainab Salbi, have all played particularly valuable roles. And resolution 1820 (2008), making systemic sexual violence a war crime, was a landmark step forward.

But the problem persists, not just in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, but in conflicts across the globe. The events in Guinea this week are a cruel reminder of how rape and political repression go hand in hand.

The message from today's meeting should be that women can never be truly empowered while they remain threatened by sexual violence, and that peace cannot take root when half the community — the female half — lives in fear and trepidation. The Security Council must take up its responsibilities and never again relegate the question of systematic sexual violence to being a secondary issue. It is not. The measures we have adopted over the last two years, including today's resolution, now have to be pursued and implemented.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Costa Rica.

Mr. Urbina (*spoke in Spanish*): Madam President, Costa Rica recognizes your personal leadership and the efforts that your country has made in seeking to combat sexual violence in situations of armed conflict. We believe that the adoption of this new resolution is another firm step in the path that we began last year with resolution 1820 (2008) to stop the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war.

Costa Rica's position on this subject was made clear in the thematic open debate held on 7 August this year. For that reason, I will limit myself to highlighting only two points. The first point concerns the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and, the second, the team of experts we are establishing in this resolution 1888 (2009).

The appointment of a special representative of the Secretary-General to combat sexual violence will, without a doubt, play a strategic role in providing visibility to this fundamental issue and, above all, in helping to organize concerted action to combat sexual violence in situations of armed conflict.

We believe that it is necessary to harmonize this provisional mechanism with the setting up of the new composite gender entity established by the General Assembly in resolution 63/311, in order to avoid duplication and overlapping of functions. We believe that the Special Representative should be at the head of the United Nations campaign against sexual violence in conflict situations, UN Action, in order to make better use of the existing resources and capacities of the Organization. We hope that the enthusiasm generated by the establishment of this new instrument can be translated into tangible contributions to equip it with the necessary capacity to live up to the high expectations we all have for it.

In relation to the team of experts, we deem it extremely timely to create such an entity on the basis of such successful initiatives as the United Nations Standing Police Capacity. We deem such strategic interventions and technical assistance to be of utmost use in helping States to establish their own mechanisms to address the problem of sexual violence. We believe that it would be useful to assess the possibility of complementing and expanding these early and rapid response capacities with technical assistance for the strengthening of the rule of law and security sector reform.

In conclusion, I should like, on behalf of the Human Security Network, which is comprised of Austria, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Greece, Ireland, Jordan, Mali, Norway, Slovenia, Switzerland and Thailand, with South Africa as an observer, to express our gratification at the conclusion of the process that led to the adoption of this new resolution. As we said in our statement on 7 August, we commend the progress that the Security Council has made in its thematic discussions on this topic, and reiterate our conviction that it is necessary to continue working towards a comprehensive and strategic approach

focused on the critical areas of prevention, protection, the participation of women, accountability, assistance to victims and data collection, which we discussed in detail at our most recent debate on this topic.

The President: I call on the representative of Austria.

Mr. Mayr-Harting (Austria): I should like at the outset to thank you, Madam President, for your personal leadership in the fight against sexual violence in armed conflict. I should also like to thank Ambassador Susan Rice and the United States Mission in New York for the energy and determination they have demonstrated in conducting our work on this resolution in recent weeks.

We believe that this resolution will significantly contribute to strengthening the United Nations response to sexual violence in conflict situations. We see a particular need for the strategic leadership that a newly appointed Special Representative of the Secretary-General can provide. Her or his work will help us address this scourge on a systematic basis in each and every conflict situation where acts of sexual violence occur. With this goal in view, we also look forward to the upcoming proposals to be submitted by the Secretary-General on enhancing monitoring and reporting on sexual violence. I should like to add that we very much appreciate the personal commitment of the Secretary-General in this matter.

Today's resolution will, we hope, also pave the way for a much more systematic flow of information between United Nations peacekeeping missions and the sanctions committees of the Council on sexual violence in areas of conflict. Where necessary, the Council must ensure the accountability of those responsible for sexual violence in armed conflict, including through the establishment of commissions of inquiry, referrals to the International Criminal Court and the imposition of targeted measures.

At the same time, it is absolutely unacceptable that civilians, in particular women and girls, also continue to fall victim to sexual violence on a daily basis in conflict zones where United Nations peacekeeping missions have a key responsibility for their protection. The fight against sexual violence must therefore also be at the core of our overall civilian protection agenda. Austria thus pledges to take this work forward when the Council next considers the protection of civilians in armed conflicts during our presidency of the Security Council in the month of November.

The President: I call on the representative of Japan.

Mr. Takasu (Japan): I should like to extend a warm welcome to you, Madam, and to thank you for personally presiding over this important meeting of the Security Council. We are also grateful to the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General for their presence and their leadership.

Japan is pleased with the unanimous adoption of resolution 1888 (2009), and highly appreciates the initiative taken by the delegation of the United States. This resolution manifests the strong commitment of the Security Council to combating sexual violence, which is still prevalent in so many conflict areas in the world. The resolution provides significant added value to last year's milestone resolution 1820 (2008). It calls on us to meet urgent needs on the ground and to transform our commitment in action. In particular, it enhances a coordinated United Nations response to sexual violence in armed conflict and strengthens United Nations support for national authorities in strengthening the rule of law.

We need first of all to strengthen measures to protect victims of sexual violence, but we must also end the impunity enjoyed by violators. At the same time, I should like to emphasize the importance of supporting and empowering women and children in vulnerable situations. We need to support them in realizing their full potential, even under difficult circumstances, through the provision of health services, education and vocational training, and to ensure the recurrence of conflict and sexual violence is avoided.

In the general debate last week, Prime Minister Hatoyama stressed the value of the human security approach, that is to say, not only to protect but to empower every individual to live in safety and dignity. I believe that the human security approach could provide useful guidance on assisting women and children in armed conflict. From this point of view, Japan once again welcomes the adoption of resolution 1888 (2009).

The President: I call on the representative of the Russian Federation.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I thank you, Madam, welcome you to the

Security Council. Because this is the last meeting of the September presidency of the United States, I should like to express appreciation to the Permanent Representative of the United States, Ambassador Susan Rice, and the entire American delegation for their effective leadership of the Council and for having brought a number of important and relevant issues before the Council. The Russian Federation has actively worked to contribute to the success of this undertaking.

The Russian Federation welcomes the adoption of resolution 1888 (2009) by the Security Council. This document, we believe, completes and complements previously adopted resolutions on the subject of women and peace and security, resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008).

We see sexual violence as an appalling crime that requires decisive condemnation and harsh punishment. Of particular concern are situations in which this phenomenon is widespread and systematic. We are convinced that we must not lower our attention to other forms of violations of the rights of women and violence against them in situations of armed conflict.

In this connection, Russia is in favour of a comprehensive approach to addressing these problems. The diverse nature of violence requires due attention to be given to all categories of violence. This is in the spirit of resolution 1325 (2000), which remains the foremost guideline for protecting women and ensuring their rights in conflict. We are convinced that these issues should be looked at in the context of all issues related to gender equality.

We should recall that an important prerequisite for overcoming violence against women is the full participation of women themselves in peace negotiations and post-conflict reconstruction. In this context, the Russian Federation welcomes Viet Nam's initiative to hold an open meeting of the Security Council on 5 October on the subject of the comprehensive implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), with a focus on the role of women in post-conflict reconstruction.

In conclusion, we express our conviction that, working together, we will be able not only to lower the incidence of sexual violence in armed conflict, but also to make significant progress in ensuring gender equality and improving the situation for women in the spirit of the Fourth World Conference on Women and the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly.

The President: I call on the representative of Viet Nam.

Mr. Le Luong Minh (Viet Nam): I thank you, Madam, and Ambassador Susan Rice personally, as well as the United States delegation for your efforts to strengthen the Council's commitment to combating sexual violence in armed conflict. The implementation of resolution 1820 (2008) since its adoption last year has achieved meaningful progress, most visibly in the markedly improved awareness of sexual violence across the United Nations system and the international community and in many conflict areas. The international community is increasingly recognizing the need to work together to effectively put an end to one of the most vicious and inhumane types of violence.

However, my delegation believes that formidable challenges remain, especially in implementing the resolution on the ground. This requires concerted efforts by United Nations bodies, Member States and other stakeholders to ensure a comprehensive approach to the issue of sexual violence, including, inter alia, its incorporation into the earliest stages of the peace process. In this connection, the strengthening of the United Nations coordination role is essential. We look forward to working with United Nations bodies, other stakeholders and other Member States towards this objective.

Having voted in favour of the resolution, my delegation confirms once again Viet Nam's strong commitment to ending sexual violence wherever it occurs. At the same time, we believe that resolution 1820 (2008) and resolution 1888 (2009), just adopted by the Council, should be implemented in close coordination with the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

Since women's empowerment is among the most effective tools for their protection, women's participation in peace, conflict resolution and post-conflict processes should be promoted to ensure that their weak voice is heard, their rights are respected and their urgent needs met. Measures to protect women and girls from sexual violence in conflict situations should also be designed as part of a broader comprehensive and strategic framework which covers social, economic and development issues. United Nations bodies and donors should be encouraged and helped to assist national Governments in building gender-related capacity and developing gender-sensitive programmes

to help survivors of sexual violence with services ranging from access to justice and relief from stigma and ostracism, to provision of mental and psychological health care.

It is equally important that women's physical security be supported by economic and social security through income-generation activities, education and involvement in decision-making. Toward this objective and in furtherance of the efforts the Council is taking today under the guidance of the President, Viet Nam, as the upcoming President of the Council, will convene an open debate on Monday, 5 October, on the theme "Responding to the needs of women and girls in post-conflict situations for sustainable peace and security". We look forward to active participation, meaningful discussions and a substantive outcome that will make the international community's efforts to protect the better half of humankind more complete.

The President: I call on the representative of Turkey.

Mr. Apakan (Turkey): I would first like to thank the United States delegation and in particular you, Madam, for your personal involvement and leadership in advancing the cause of women around the world and for your most commendable efforts in mobilizing the Council around the adoption of this important resolution today. I also wish to express our deep appreciation to the Secretary-General for his commitment to combating violence against women and re-energizing the entire United Nations system in that direction.

Today, with the adoption of resolution 1888 (2009), the Council has sent yet another strong message to the world at large that violence against women and children, particularly in situations of armed conflict, is not acceptable and that such acts will never be tolerated. Your presence here today, Madam, amplifies this message and further solidifies our resolve. Indeed, the women and children who continue to be subjected to the cruelest forms of violence during armed conflict shall hopefully see that they are not alone in their plight and that the international community will spare no effort to stop their suffering.

This is why Turkey has supported this resolution from the very beginning and actively contributed to its negotiation, bearing in mind the Council's primary responsibility for the protection of civilians in times of armed conflict, in particular women and children.

The resolution we have adopted today has many important aspects, but maybe its most significant added value derives from its action-oriented nature. Indeed, in the resolution we not only condemn those who perpetrate acts of violence against women, but also call for action against them. With the establishment of a new mechanism and the decision to appoint a special representative in particular, the United Nations and the international community have demonstrated their firm commitment and political will to effectively preventing sexual violence against women, combating impunity and enforcing accountability and the rule of law.

Turkey is fully committed to exerting every effort in order to ensure the effective implementation of the resolution. Together with resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008), resolution 1888 (2009) provides us with a comprehensive framework for empowering women, and we will do our utmost to make the best use of this opportunity.

The President: I call on the representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

Mr. Shalgham (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I wish to thank you, Madam, and to convey our appreciation for your initiative. I also greet Ambassador Susan Rice and thank her for her efforts and wise leadership of the Security Council during the month of September, as well as for the initiatives and projects she has launched. I welcome the Ministers for Foreign Affairs who have joined us this morning.

The Council's visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and other African countries that have experienced long periods of conflict, and our meetings with a number of victims of acts of sexual violence and torture, were shocking for all of us. At the same time, we hold out great hope after meeting with young people from all regions of the world who are providing the victims with psychological and professional assistance. We feel that the human conscience is stronger and greater than those who commit such crimes. The will to live is stronger than the will to die.

The perpetrators of acts of violence do not simply kill their victims, but maim and defile the survivors irreversibly. As a result, it is essential that domestic legislation be adopted to ensure that those crimes do not go unpunished and that the perpetrators be brought to justice, as they incite hatred and violence.

The events that took place in Conakry, Guinea, yesterday and the stories we have heard from the poor and vulnerable women who have suffered and been raped, then tortured and killed, are truly horrific.

Therefore, I would like to thank you, Madam President, for this initiative, and the Secretary-General for his initiative in appointing a Special Representative for women and sexual violence in areas of conflict. Any criminal anywhere, whether in Afghanistan, in Iraq, in the Congo or in Palestine, must be brought to justice.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Croatia.

Mr. Vilović (Croatia): Allow me first to thank you personally, Madam President, and the United States delegation and Ambassador Susan Rice for the continuing leadership on the issue of sexual violence in armed conflict. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his steady engagement.

Croatia would like to add its voice to those who strive to put an end to that abhorrent practice. Since the representative of Croatia delivered a speech during the open debate on the implementation of resolution 1820 (2008) in August this year (*S/PV.6180, p.16*), allow me here merely to add some brief remarks.

First and foremost, I would like to state that Croatia was a strong supporter of resolution 1820 (2008) within the Council, from its conceptual phase to its ultimate adoption. In that same vein, we now give equal support to the new resolution 1888 (2009) that we have just adopted today, and we would like to take this opportunity to congratulate everyone who has worked so hard to gain that result.

With resolution 1888 (2009), the Security Council recognizes many important elements in the fight against sexual violence in armed conflict. It recognizes the need for civilian and military leaders to demonstrate political will in combating impunity and using their authority and powers to prevent sexual violence. It demands protection for civilians from sexual violence by all parties to an armed conflict and urges them to investigate all reports of sexual violence.

The members of the Security Council have had the opportunity to visit today's most affected areas and to talk to victims, and are fully aware of gravity of the problem. Moreover, the Security Council has reiterated its intention, when adopting or renewing targeted sanctions, to consider including designation criteria pertaining to acts of rape and other forms of sexual violence.

Notwithstanding those positive measures, we believe that the resolution's request to the Secretary-General to appoint a Special Representative to address the issue of sexual violence in armed conflict, as well as to rapidly deploy a team of experts to situations of particular concern with respect to sexual violence, deserves special praise.

In adopting resolution 1888 (2009), as well as through the recently adopted resolution 1882 (2009), the Security Council is sending a clear signal to those who continue to perpetrate horrific crimes against women and girls in armed conflict and to those who tolerate or condone such sexual violence. They will be held accountable.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Uganda.

Mr. Rugunda (Uganda): I welcome the fact that you are presiding over this Council meeting in person, Madam President. It is a demonstration of your commitment to the total elimination of sexual violence, which has been so prevalent, especially in a number of African countries. Uganda voted in favour of resolution 1888 (2009) because of our continued commitment to the welfare of women, and especially of girls, who tend to be the primary casualties in conflict situations.

Sexual violence is a global problem. Therefore, every effort must be made to ensure that the culprits are held accountable for their despicable actions. Once again, that is a reminder that sexual violence in conflict-related situations can be prevented if peace, stability and the rule of law are restored in the affected countries.

Uganda welcomes the resolution's recognition of the needs of national justice systems that have been weakened by conflicts and the understanding that, if the international community does not assist those institutions to rebuild their capacity, it is useless to call for an end to impunity or for the prosecution of war criminals or perpetrators of sexual violence.

Let me take this opportunity to thank Ambassador Rice and the United States Mission for spearheading the adoption of this resolution.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of China.

Mr. Zhang Yesui (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): First, I would like to thank you, Madam President, for presiding over today's meeting in person and the Secretary-General for the statement that he has just made.

China condemns all acts of violence against women in conflict situations, including sexual violence. We call on all parties to conflicts to abide by international humanitarian law and international human rights law. We call on Governments to investigate and punish the perpetrators of such crimes against women. We also call on all countries to adopt measures for their early accession to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

In view of the above, the Chinese delegation voted in favour of resolution 1820 (2008) in April last year and of resolution 1888 (2009) that we have just adopted. Here, we would like to express our appreciation for the efforts of Ambassador Rice and the flexible approach and constructive attitude of the United States Mission during the consultations.

With regard to improving the protection of women in armed conflict, I would like to underscore the following three points.

First, Governments bear primary responsibility for protecting women and combating crimes of sexual violence. The international community should provide effective assistance in that regard. While the primary responsibility for implementing resolutions 1820 (2008) and 1888 (2009) lies with Governments, both conflict-affected countries and those in post-conflict situations are often faced with many difficulties. Therefore, the international and donor communities should provide generous assistance to help their capacity-building efforts. At the same time, I would like to stress that the provision of external support and assistance should comply with the principles of the United Nations Charter and should respect the wishes of the country concerned while not undermining its sovereignty.

Secondly, women's participation in the different stages of a peace process should be strengthened and attention should be paid to their status and their role. The rights and interests of women must be respected and protected throughout the entire peace process and their special needs and concerns heeded. They should be given greater participation and more decision-making power. In recent years, the Secretariat has taken many positives steps to increase the number of senior women officials and female heads of United Nations special missions. We hope that those efforts will continue in the future.

Thirdly, efforts should be made to encourage and support the participation of civil society in the protection of women. Many colleagues in non-governmental organizations work on the ground under difficult conditions to promote the protection of women's rights and interests. Their work should be acknowledged. China supports them in their continuing constructive role to protect women in situations of armed conflict. We encourage them to continue their engagement with other United Nations agencies, especially those directly involved in women's issues, as well as to put forward reasonable proposals in that regard.

The Chinese Government has always paid great attention to improving the status of women and protecting their rights and interests. We would like to work together with the international community in our common effort to reduce acts of sexual violence in the world and to achieve the goals in the area of women and peace and security.

The President: There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Before I adjourn the meeting, I want to thank Ambassador Susan Rice, our Permanent Representative, and the United States Mission and all who work with her every day on behalf of our country. I also wish to thank Ms. Esther Brimmer, Assistant Secretary for International Organizations, and her staff, as well as Melanne Verveer, our Ambassador for Global Women's Issues. I also want to extend my best wishes to Ms. Norma Chan, Chief of the Security Council Secretariat Branch, who is retiring today after 36 years with the United Nations. We want to give Norma a proper send-off as she embarks upon a new chapter in her life. We thank her for her dedicated service.

Finally, let me thank all members very much, not only for their votes but also for their extremely helpful and substantive comments.

The meeting rose at 11.25 a.m.